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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

9 November 1955

SUBJECT: Major Items Discussed at [redacted] on
31 October and 1 November

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1. Use of Aircraft for Test Purposes: I agreed with Kelly Johnson and advised the other suppliers, [redacted] that two aircraft would be maintained and flown by Lockheed for flight test purposes during the next few months as follows: No. 1 aircraft will be used until the first of the year for airframe and P-37 engines. As soon as the first P-31 engine is available, it will be installed in No. 1 which will be used as long as necessary for airframe and engine flight testing. No. 2 aircraft is currently being employed for the flight testing of [redacted] camera configurations as available. This will continue until the delivery of No. 4, at which time No. 2 will be turned over by Lockheed for training use. Upon the delivery of No. 4 (the first aircraft with the automatic pilot), it will be flown by Lockheed and used for flight testing of the automatic pilot and continued flight testing of camera configurations. In April it is anticipated that No. 10 aircraft, which will be equipped to take [redacted] will be assigned to Lockheed and used for the flight testing of these items. At that time, however, No. 4 will be released for training or operational use. It is also anticipated that flight testing of airframe and engine will be complete by April and that No. 1 can be released for operational use at that time.

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2. Phasing: The Consensus of Messrs. Johnson and [redacted] is that our basic assumptions as to aircraft hours of operation and required training [redacted] can be modified. As to the first, it should be possible after the first month of operation to obtain, say, 75 hours of operation per aircraft. The training of [redacted] should require eight to ten hours of transition plus around 45 hours in simulating full length missions. Taking these assumptions, and assuming (a) no more than two aircraft assigned to flight testing, and (b) the availability of pilots beginning early in December, it should be possible to complete the training of eight to ten [redacted] by 1 April. With the delivery of No. 9 aircraft on

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30 March, it will become possible to deploy four aircraft overseas and still leave three for training purposes. Accordingly, our plan should contemplate that the deployment of Detachment A should be completed with the movement overseas of pilots and primary mission aircraft no later than 1 April. The deployment of other components of the Detachment should be scheduled at appropriate times in advance of that date, beginning probably with the first echelon to include Comme and Security personnel, no later than 15 February.

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4. Processing of Film: New processing equipment is under procurement for installation [redacted] to permit more rapid and better processing of film during flight testing. It was tentatively agreed that a shed must be built against the back of No. 1 hangar to accommodate this equipment and an additional dark room. Red Scott indicated, however, that it would be highly desirable to have access to other more highly developed facilities so as to be able to process selected samples of film exposed during flight testing in such a way as to maximize the quality of the reproduction. The suggestion was made that we should seek access to the [redacted] 25X1A processing facility. It was agreed that the Rochester facility should be activated sometime before the commencement of overseas operations and that film exposed during flight testing should be taken there for processing so as to gain experience in this phase of the operation. It was agreed that a modest flow of film to Rochester might begin by the middle or the end of January, which would allow for two months preparatory operation of that facility.

RICHARD M. BISSELL, JR.
Project Director

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